Approved for Release: 2018/10/08 C00639292
EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs
EO 13526 3.5(c)

SECRET/NOFORN/NOCONTRACT/ORCON

AA0008

9/26/79

HUMAN RIGHTS HIGHLIGHTS

STATE DEPT. DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW
☐ Retain class'n ☐ Change/classify to ____
☒ Declassify ☒ with concurrence of CIA
☐ after ____
EO 12958 25X 3.4 (1)
FPC/HDR by ____ Date: 11/26/96
Withdrawal No. ____

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B1.

ARGENTINA: TIMERMAN RELEASED

SOURCES: Press; Buenos Aires 7838; 7881; 7917; 7962;

3.3(b)(1) [redacted]

(U) Jacobo Timerman, Argentina's best known political prisoner, was stripped of his citizenship and expelled from the country on the evening of September 25. He is expected to join his family in Israel.

(C) Rumors concerning Timerman's impeding release gained currency following a reported Supreme Court decision of September 17 that declared his detention illegal. The Court's decision has not been made public, but Embassy Buenos Aires sources have indicated that the Court acted independently of executive pressure.

(U) Kidnapped in April 1977 by security agents, Timerman has been held despite a military tribunal's finding that he was not guilty of subversive actions and a July 1978 Supreme Court ruling that his detention under state-of-siege powers was unjustified.

3.3(b)(1) [redacted]

source, President Videla had promised the head of the visiting Inter-American Human Rights Commission (September 6-20) that the government would respect the Supreme Court's decision favoring Timerman.

(C) INR Comment: Timerman's release is a significant accomplishment for Videla and his moderate military supporters.

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(C) No evidence was ever published to substantiate charges that Timerman was involved in political or economic subversion. Furthermore, his continued detention seriously compromised the government at a time when the frequency of category one human rights violations was declining significantly. Timerman was held in spite of these facts because he symbolized for military hardliners and counter-terrorist fanatics what they hold responsible for the nation's ills. Even though he was not a terrorist per se, Timerman's detractors believe that he encouraged and justified subversion through his journalism, associated with those who financed terrorism (Graiver, et. al.), and participated in a variety of corrupt business deals. That he is a Jew compounded his problem with anti-Semitic military officers, as did his tendency to be arrogant.

(C) That so much was suspected and so little was proven seemed only to be taken as evidence that Timerman is very clever and, therefore, all the more dangerous. The irrationality of those like Brig. Gen. Camps, who conducted the original investigation into Timerman's affairs, made it difficult for those aware of the political-diplomatic implications of the case to secure Timerman's release. That he has now been expelled can probably be attributed to a Videla decision to push the matter at a propitious moment, i.e., in the context of the IAHRC visit and the Supreme Court decision.

[redacted] 3.5(c)



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